

sites. On October 12, 2006, I was proud to see the Crossroads National Heritage Area signed into law by the President. I hope that with the passage of this bill and eventual signature of the President, many of my colleagues will get to experience similar pride with the creation of national heritage areas in their districts for the benefit of their constituents.

Many of these National Heritage Areas do not receive money from the Federal Government alone. The New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, for example, receives only a third of its funding from the Federal Government. Our investments in National Heritage Areas are often matched by State and local governments as well as the private sector.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1483 will enable millions of Americans to visit and treasure heritage areas in their home State and across the Nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important piece of legislation.

THE WITHDRAWAL OF MY CO-
SPONSORSHIP OF H.R. 106, THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE RESOLU-
TION

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Ms. KILPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I am opposed to genocide whenever and wherever it has occurred in history and I believe that we should never forget any atrocity that occurs anywhere, at any time. While I believe that the incidents that took place in Armenia were wrong and merit acknowledgement, I have decided to withdraw my sponsorship of H.R. 106, the Armenian Genocide Resolution.

Turkey is a strategic partner and one of our few friends in the Middle East. It allows us to use its air force base at Incirlik for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Turkey's leaders have said if this resolution passes, they will withdraw our military access to this base. Because the President has distanced or destroyed our relationships with many countries as a result of the war in Iraq, we should maintain and strengthen our rapport with the few allies we have, particularly in the Middle East.

However, there is a more important and fundamental reason that I have withdrawn my support. I can no longer support any resolution that condemns another country for its actions, while we here in the United States will not address and have not come to terms with the miscarriages of justice, the lack of equality, and the human rights violations that take place against our own citizens.

Our poor, our women, our less educated, our people of color, and others who are disadvantaged and disenfranchised across our great country—lauded as the “land of opportunity”—suffer daily from injustice and inequality. They lack access to affordable health care,

quality education, well-paying jobs, capital, and other items necessary to give them and their families a chance at achieving the American Dream. Most recently, the President chose to veto a bill that would provide access to health care to 10 million children of working class parents. This is simply inexcusable.

In the Bible, John 8:7 reads “let him who is without sin cast the first stone.” Here, in the United States, we are often quick to point out the faults and flaws of other countries, their leaders, and their citizens. However, before we criticize, chastise, and condemn them, we must first challenge our own imperfections, consider our own inadequacies, confront our own issues, and change our own behavior.

There are human rights violations taking place all across the world, from Sudan and Syria, to Bangladesh and Burma, to Nicaragua and Colombia. Simultaneously, there are unresolved human rights challenges here in America that we have not begun to tackle.

I was always taught to take care of home first. I believe that America can and should be a force for change. As a world leader, we not only have the power, but we also have the responsibility, to make a positive difference in the lives of others—here at home and in countries around the world. However, before we point the finger at anyone else, we must take a deeper, closer look at the problems that plague our cities, our communities, and our country and work to change the lives of our citizens for the better.

This resolution, at this time, could undermine the efforts of the United States to prevent the Turkish military from launching an attack inside Iraq; it could create a logistical nightmare for our military women and men in Iraq and Afghanistan. If we have strained relations with Turkey, the largest Muslim ally we have in the Middle East, further damage to the standing of the United States in the Islamic world would be the immediate result.

This is the right bill, but this is the wrong time. America must be what we want to see for the world.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 175TH AN-
NIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING
OF COOSA COUNTY, ALABAMA

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay recognition to the citizens of Coosa County, Alabama, who on this Saturday, October 27, will celebrate their county's 175th anniversary.

On December 18, 1832, the Alabama Legislature established Coosa County from lands acquired under the Creek Indian Treaty of Cusseta. The October 24th celebration will take place in the county seat of Rockford,

and will feature organizations from around the county. In addition to a live band and county history lecture, each of the county's cities and towns will present a welcome address.

I am pleased to recognize the citizens of Coosa County today for reaching this important milestone in the history of their county, and in the history of our great State.

RECOGNIZING FAMAGUSTA,
CYPRUS AS A GHOST CITY

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 25, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker, yesterday, I met with Mr. Alexis Galanos, Mayor of Famagusta, Cyprus to discuss the current situation he and his constituents face every day.

In 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus, running residents of Famagusta out of their town and their homes in fear. Since then, Famagustians have been unable to return to their city in the occupied area, and the city itself remains a ghost town.

Prior to the invasion, Famagusta was a bustling tourist destination and an economic dynamo. The hotel and construction industries were booming, the harbor had been widened to further contribute to its economic activity, and the rich and fertile mainland easily supported production of the potato crop.

This all changed with the invasion of Turkish soldiers. Turkish troops drove the people of Famagusta out of their town and sealed it off with barbed wire. This is how the situation remains today, 33 years later. 45,000 residents of Famagusta have become refugees in their own country; they lost their land, their homes, their property, their businesses, their livelihoods, and for some, their lives. Since the Turkish invasion, churches, cathedrals, monasteries, and the cultural heritage have been subject to looting, vandalism, destruction, and theft.

In 2003, partial lifting of movement restrictions by the occupying regime allowed some displaced Greek Cypriots to visit their old homes, but they are still denied the right to return to where they were born and raised. Property that was once in the hands of Greek Cypriots has been unlawfully distributed to illegal settlers from Turkey, and unprecedented illegal construction is taking place on land that technically belongs to Greek Cypriots.

The former residents of Famagusta worked very hard to make a living. Families spent decades paving the way for the well-being of future generations, but they were forced to start over from square one.

The people of Famagusta, like other Greek Cypriot refugees, have a burning desire, and a right, to return to their homes. I am pleased that Mayor Galanos was able to visit Washington to share the story of Famagusta, Europe's Ghost Town.